



THE HUB

The Alabama Supercomputer Authority Newsletter



Congrats to ASA's own Michael Frazier on his promotion to Building Manager of our Supercomputer Center in Huntsville! Michael has worked for ASA for over twelve years and is well deserving of this promotion. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to ASA. We are very proud of you!

ASA SPOTLIGHT: SPANISH FORT PUBLIC LIBRARY



IN THIS ISSUE

**ASA SPOTLIGHT:
SPANISH FORT PUBLIC
LIBRARY**

CLIENT SERVICES

NEWS IN GOVERNMENT

MESSAGE FROM CEO



This month's spotlight is on Spanish Fort Public Library. The library's director Tracy Michelle Hall-Cole wrote the following article in regards to how ASA and the Spanish Fort Public Library make a winning team! Thank you Tracy and team for all you do for the citizens of Spanish Fort.

Alabama Supercomputer Authority is SUPER alright!

(continued on page 2)

ASA Spotlight: Spanish Fort Library (cont'd)

Spanish Fort Public Library (SFPL) is one of 13 libraries and a bookmobile that make up the Baldwin County Library Cooperative, or BCLC, and is one of the youngest libraries to join the Cooperative, opening its library doors to the county and community in 2015. SFPL is the first public library for the City of Spanish Fort, and is a welcome addition to Baldwin County, the fastest growing county in the state of Alabama for over a decade. SFPL is housed under the same roof as City Hall, within the Spanish Fort Community Center, and has a 7,000 square foot library space, including a library meeting room and eight station computer lab. In addition, the library serves the community by providing a third space for residents that is unlike anything else in our growing city, a cool, air-conditioned, and fun environment where you are not required to spend a dime.



In the fall of 2020, SFPL Library Director, Tracy Cole, investigated the possibility of participating with Alabama Supercomputer Authority (ASA) to assist with e-rate needs and to increase much necessary bandwidth that the library was severely lacking. Under the same roof as City Hall and the Spanish Fort Senior Center, the library WiFi, and library computer lab were often slow and WiFi access was spotty at best on busier days. From 2015 to 2020 this issue was becoming increasingly familiar and problematic for library patrons and staff.



Cole wasn't sure if it was even possible to have separate internet from the City since we shared the same facility. Cole reached out to ASA with these questions in the fall of 2020, and by early July 2021, our young library was all set up with Alabama Supercomputer Authority in just a matter of days. The changes in access were immediately noticeable and the staff at ASA were helpful beyond compare, even calling to check in on us late July to make sure everything was working properly. With limited library staffing and no library IT staff person here on site, the troubleshooting and tech help provided by ASA has been a godsend.

(continued on page 3)

ASA Spotlight: Spanish Fort Library (cont'd)

ASA not only evaluates our bandwidth needs, they also offer 24-hour maintenance and notifications on any issues that arise. In addition, ASA collects and provide monthly statistics on WiFi usage that Cole reports to both the library board and City Council, as well as documents in the annual public library survey due each December, which shows impact of library usage in other ways than just books.

It is hard to imagine Spanish Fort Public Library without Alabama Supercomputer Authority, as they have become a welcome addition to our library story and always helpful and knowledgeable on any issues that arise. ASA is an amazing service to our community and the state and we are so thankful to have this incredible partnership and appreciate all that they do for the success of public libraries they partner with and the success of Alabama.



Client Services

Nichole Gipson
Client Services Director

FY2023 E-RATE CONSORTIUM APPLICATION FILING

ASA successfully completed its FY2023 E-rate Consortium application filing. In March, we filed 255 Category One applications for Managed Internet Access and Managed WAN Services for 866 K12 schools and library sites in the state of Alabama. The sites consisted of 679 public K12 schools and 187 public libraries. This filing will result in a savings of over \$29.9M for these schools and libraries during Funding Year 2023. ASA has participated in the E-rate program as the Consortium Lead for the past twenty-five years, and each year our Consortium membership has grown, making this ASA's largest application filing. Our K12 schools and libraries were instrumental in making this year's filing a success and we are so appreciative of your cooperation and support.

News in Government

Cary Hill

Governmental Affairs Director

2023 GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Recently, the Alabama Supercomputer team attended the "Legislative Issues Update" hosted by the Alabama Council of Association Executives (ACAE). Those who spoke were Governor Kay Ivey, Assistant Finance Director Susan Wilhelm, Alabama Department of Education Superintendent Dr. Eric Mackey, Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth, Senate Majority Leader Clay Scofield and Senate Minority Leader Bobby Singleton as well as House Speaker Pro Tempore Chris Pringle.

The focus on Governor Ivey's update centered around the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA II), broadband, updating infrastructure and healthcare. Governor Ivey spoke mainly on the ARPA money and the vitality of this federal money coming down to the state that totals \$1 billion. Susan Wilhelm echoed Governor Ivey's comments in her presentation.

Lt. Governor Ainsworth and legislators agreed with Governor Ivey on broadband, infrastructure and a tax rebate for citizens.

On March 7, 2023, Governor Ivey announced in her State of the State Address that she would call the legislature into a special session to address the American Rescue Plan Act ARPA funds. The special session started on March 8 with both the House and the Senate sponsoring a bill. The Alabama Legislature convened on Tuesday, March 14 to continue its special session to appropriate the remaining \$1.06 billion of the state's portion of federal ARPA funds and to repay almost \$60 million owed to the Alabama Trust Fund. The legislature finalized both pieces of legislation on Thursday, March 16, and adjourned the special session. Governor Ivey signed both bills into law several hours later.

The legislature resumed the regular session on March 21 and worked three days on new legislation. They took a "legislative spring break" beginning the week of March 27. The legislature reconvened on April 4.

It should be a great 2023 Legislative session!





A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Debra Wallace

ASA has experienced significant growth in client sites over the past three years, especially with the intentional outreach to K12 schools. Client sites grew by 26% in 2023 and ASA bandwidth subscription is at an all-time high. As more sites are connected to the Alabama Research and Education Network (AREN), ASA is well prepared to manage this growth with AREN's 200G backbone that will be in place on July 1, 2023. This upgraded infrastructure will provide ASA with greater bandwidth capacity, enabling the increased demand for its services as the agency expands. It's important for ASA to stay proactive in its efforts to maintain and improve its services to meet the needs of its expanding client base.

ASA's Network Operations Center (NOC) and Security Operations Center (SOC) are also ready to support this growth with continuous monitoring to ensure that all connections and systems are available, up-to-date and secure, and that any protentional threats are quickly identified and addressed. ASA is committed to supporting education in Alabama and is a robust and dependable agency.

Best regards,



Exciting times ahead at AETC as ASA will provide tours of our Center in Huntsville! Please complete your registration and join us for an informative tour of our SOC, NOC and Datacenter. The tour will count for CE credit and hours as part of the conference. Transportation will be provided with more details available when the final schedule is published by the AETC committee. Refreshments and an ASA limited edition T-shirt will be provided!